CHATEAU MONTELENA
ESTABLISHED 1882

2019 Potter Valley Riesling

Notes from the Winemaker, Matt Crafton

INTRODUCTION

What a difference a year makes. Deciding not to harvest the 2018 Riesling due to smoke exposure in the vineyard was agonizing but it was the correct decision. For the first time since 1972, Chateau Montelena did not make Riesling, but the 2019 was well worth the wait. Not only is it delicious and certainly fills the void from the missed vintage, but the entire episode, capped with the comeback of an amazing wine, serves as yet another example of our unwavering commitment to integrity and honesty. The rhetoric of "high standards" and "no compromises" is bandied about, but the idea of crafting a wine contrary to our values wasn't even considered. Welcome back Riesling.

VINTAGE WEATHER

The vineyard in Potter Valley tends to bud out slightly later than those here in Napa Valley. Consequently, the late spring rains galvanized the period of grand growth as summer began. The excess moisture put a premium on managing the vine canopy to encourage dappled sunlight for ripening and discourage any unsavory pests as fall approached. We decide to harvest primarily based on flavor and balance in the fruit, and this year that balance was achieved at slightly higher ripeness compared to previous vintages. The result is an opulent, voluptuous, but still fresh and dynamic wine.

NOSE

Ripe and tropical, the aromatics simply pop, sashaying from lychee to pear, and peach to melon. As the wine warms in the glass, star jasmine is revealed and the wine leans toward decidedly more floral and perfume elements, without relinquishing that beautiful varietal character.

PALATE

On the one hand lush but also lively, pineapple, apricot, and honeycomb belie the razor-sharp acidity that cuts through mid-sip. The honeycomb in particular transitions to a sultry marzipan like nuttiness that adds richness to an already flashy palate.

FINISH

Here the ginger emerges along with lychee once again as the wine's density is clearly evident. Citrus appears as well in the form of fresh lemon peel as the acid slowly begins to fade with one more hint of tropical passionfruit.

Technical Information

HARVEST DATES
September 26–27

ALCOHOL
13.4%

BLEND
100% Riesling

BARREL AGING
6 months in French oak and stainless steel

BOTTLING DATE
March 2020

WINEMAKER
Matt Crafton

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